



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, April 13, 2020

CONTACT: Dorinda Carter
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TDOC Has Essential Job Openings

TIPTONVILLE – During this difficult time in our nation’s history, many people have been met with economic struggles impacting their jobs and livelihood. For those who are currently seeking employment in these uncertain times, the Tennessee Department of Correction (TDOC) has immediate openings for positions that are recession proof and essential to the community. **There is a career waiting near you at the Northwest Correctional Complex in Tiptonville, Tennessee.**

Some highlights of a career in TDOC include a starting salary of \$32,500 for the first year, with an automatic increase to \$34,100 upon successful completion of the one year probationary period. A career in corrections can lead to other growth opportunities including: training instructors, counselors, investigators, wardens, administration, communications, public and media relations, search and rescue, K-9 specialists, among many others. Employees can also take advantage of obtaining or completing a college degree through the state’s free college tuition program.

“I enjoy my job which is essential during this epidemic, “Correctional Officer II, Darveice Yates said. “We are frontline staff and we have to be here. We have to keep law and order and keep the community safe.”

Corporal Robert McCants had similar sentiments about his career with TDOC. “It makes me feel really proud and honored that I can assist a team that is here to protect both staff and inmates during this horrific time we are all going through right now. We are a team and we will get through this together. I encourage others to join us as we work to protect our friends, family and neighbors.”

Anyone interested in beginning their career with TDOC can apply at <https://www.tn.gov/content/tn/correction/eo/choose-a-career/correctional-officer.html>, or call Northwest Correctional Complex at 731-253-5121.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, April 21, 2020

CONTACT: Dorinda Carter
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TDOC Launches Covid-19 Information Line for Public

Nashville – Beginning Wednesday April 22, the Tennessee Department of Correction will launch a 24-hour COVID-19 Information Line for family members of incarcerated individuals. The TDOC COVID-19 Information Line will be answered by a live analyst who will respond to questions related to COVID-19 testing updates, TDOC's response to the virus and protective measures that have been taken as this fluid situation continues to unfold.

Commissioner Tony Parker said the Information Line is another tool that inmate families can use to inquire about their loved ones. TDOC understands that for every inmate inside a facility there are mothers, fathers, children and others who may have concerns or questions especially in these times. That is why we encourage the inmate population to stay in close contact with their families through frequent, no-cost telephone calls and through letters. We want inmates and their family to have every opportunity to communicate with each other and as often as possible," Parker said.

The Information Line will operate 24/hours, 7 days a week. "We are all working hand in hand during this time. I appreciate the cooperation of the inmate population in maintaining a high level of sanitation and adhering to the necessary adjustments we have had to make. We are all in this together," Parker said.

The TDOC COVID-19 Information Line can be reached at **1.866.858.0380**. Family and friends can also find answers to frequently asked questions about TDOC's response to COVID-19 on our website at www.tn.gov/correction or email: TDOC.Communications@tn.gov

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, April 20, 2020

CONTACT: Dorinda Carter
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TDOC Takes Covid-19 Actions for Inmate Population

Nashville – The Department of Correction has launched a third round of mass testing of inmates at three facilities as part of its strategic, proactive targeted plan based on aggressive contact tracing. Testing began on Sunday, April 19 for an additional 3,100 inmates at the Bledsoe County Correctional Complex, the Northwest Correctional Complex and the Turney Center Industrial Complex. This third round of testing follows Saturday’s response, in which 424 inmates at the Bledsoe County Correctional Complex were tested. Of those, 150 inmates tested positive and have been isolated from the rest of the population at the facility. The vast majority of those who tested positive were asymptomatic. 262 tests were negative and 12 results are pending. The positive inmate test results since April 4 are as follows:

Bledsoe County Correctional Complex-----	162
Turney Center Industrial Complex-----	5
Northwest Correctional Complex-----	2
Trousdale Turner Correctional Center-----	1

All inmates at the Bledsoe County Correctional Complex are being tested based on an aggressive response to the number of positive cases and out of an abundance of caution. “The decision to expand testing at the Northwest and Turney Center prisons is based on the positive returns, extensive contact tracing and a sound methodology,” Commissioner Tony Parker said. “The inmates who are being tested at these two facilities either had direct exposure to a confirmed positive case, or were screened positive and symptomatic, or those with potential exposure due to the living structure of a correctional environment. A similar methodology has been implemented at Trousdale Turner resulting in the targeted testing of a select number of inmates by the contract vendor. Cloth masks have been



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 1, 2020

CONTACT: Gillum Ferguson
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COVID-19 Unified Command Group to Launch Mass Testing Strategy of State's Prison Population and Staff

Trousdale Turner Correctional Center Yields 1,246 Positive Cases

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Tennessee Governor Bill Lee's Unified Command Group (UCG) is announcing today a mass COVID-19 testing initiative will begin next week for all Tennessee Department of Correction (TDOC) staff and the inmates in their care.

"Knowing the extent of the virus's spread within our correctional facilities is critical as incarcerated individuals remain one of the most vulnerable populations during this pandemic," said Gov. Lee. "Thanks to our increased capacity, we'll test all inmates and staff statewide in order to take appropriate actions to safeguard the health of these vulnerable individuals."

Today, TDOC confirmed more than 1,246 COVID-19 positive cases, out of 2,450 total tests, among staff and inmates at the Trousdale Turner Correctional Center in Trousdale County, following a targeted testing event at the facility that began on April 28.

"We've been in close coordination with TDOC as it began targeted COVID-19 testing of inmates and staff in early April," said UCG Director Stuart McWhorter. "Given the increases in positive cases at the Bledsoe County and Trousdale Turner correctional facilities, despite the vast majority being asymptomatic, we are going to take the next steps in partnership with TDOC, Tennessee Department of Health (TDH), and

All inmates who test positive and are asymptomatic receive daily medical monitoring and health assessments. Inmates who are asymptomatic will be monitored at their facilities while medical teams check daily for symptoms.

Those who may become symptomatic but don't require additional care, such as respiratory support, will be treated in place or at local hospitals, depending on their needs. Staff will self-quarantine and are monitored for symptoms and are encouraged to contact their healthcare provider.

TDOC has delivered more than 93,000 masks for staff, inmates, county jails, and health care workers. COVID-19 disinfection and safety measures are ongoing at all TDOC facilities and TDOC is practicing recommendations from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and TDH.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, April 8, 2020

CONTACT: Dorinda Carter
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TDOC Takes Covid-19 Actions After Contract Employee Tests Positive

TIPTONVILLE – Five inmates at the Northwest Correctional Complex may have potentially been exposed to a non-state employee who tested positive for COVID-19. The inmates have been quarantined and have not presented with any symptoms at this time. Steps have been taken to identify, screen and quarantine any staff who may have come into direct contact with the individual.

Tennessee Department of Health has been notified, and disinfection and safety measures are in place and ongoing. Appropriate measures have been taken to ensure the safety, health and well-being of the inmates as well as staff. Those measures follow TDOC guidelines as well as those provided by the Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), which include:

- Frequent hand-washing
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth
- Use social distancing
- Stay home if you are sick
- Clean and disinfect often
- Wear protective medical masks and gloves when necessary

The Department of Correction encourages members of the public to visit our website for [Frequently Asked Questions Related TO COVID-19](#).

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Friday, April 10, 2020

CONTACT: Dorinda Carter
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TDOC Takes Covid-19 Actions After Inmate Tests Positive

ONLY – An inmate at the Turney Center Industrial Complex-Annex in Only has tested positive for COVID-19. On Tuesday, April 7, during one of the multiple proactive screenings at the facility, the inmate was shown to have a low-grade fever and was placed in quarantine. The following day, his temperature increased and he was transported to a local hospital. On Friday, his test results for the novel coronavirus returned positive. Three inmates who may have been exposed to this individual were also placed in quarantine and have not presented with any symptoms at this time. They will remain in quarantine for 14 days. Due to appropriate distancing and safety measures, no other inmates or staff members have currently been identified as having had close contact with the inmate.

The Tennessee Department of Health (TDH) has been notified, and appropriate measures have been taken to ensure the safety, health and well-being of the inmates as well as staff. Those measures follow TDOC guidelines as well as those provided by TDH and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), which include:

- Frequent hand-washing
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth
- Use social distancing
- Stay home if you are sick
- Clean and disinfect often
- Wear protective medical masks and gloves

The Department of Correction encourages members of the public to visit our website for [Frequently Asked Questions Related TO COVID-19](#).

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 9, 2020

CONTACT: Dorinda Carter
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TDOC and TDH Offer Testing for Corrections Employees

NASHVILLE – The Tennessee Department of Correction, in partnership with the Tennessee Department of Health will launch a proactive testing initiative to further ensure the safety of staff and inmates during the novel coronavirus pandemic.

Beginning Friday, April 10, the TDH will offer testing for COVID-19 to all employees at the Northwest Correctional Complex in Tiptonville and the Bledsoe County Correctional Complex in Pikeville. Following the positive COVID-19 test results of three TDOC staff members and three contract employees at the two facilities, the TDOC and the TDH began examining a mass testing approach out of an abundance of caution.

“I applaud Governor Lee for dedicating the resources toward this effort,” Commissioner Tony Parker said. “While no inmates at either facility have tested positive, we believe this proactive measure will go a long way in helping to protect staff members, their families and the inmate population. We are ahead of the curve, but make no mistake – just the fact that we’re dealing with a new virus and there is no vaccine for it changes the whole landscape of corrections.”

TDOC staff members at each facility are being notified of the available testing and the TDH will notify each employee of their test results.

Disinfection and safety measures are ongoing at the facilities. All staff and inmates have received cloth masks, and they are being reminded to continue practicing the recommendations from the CDC and the TDH to help prevent spreading COVID-19.

The Department of Correction encourages members of the public to visit our website for frequently asked questions related to COVID-19.

<https://www.tn.gov/correction/frequently-asked-questions-regarding-covid-19.html>



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 12, 2020

CONTACT: Dorinda Carter
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TDOC and TDH Testing Results for Corrections Employees

NASHVILLE – The Tennessee Department of Correction has received results from the COVID-19 testing at two state facilities. The testing was conducted on Friday, April 10, at the Northwest Correctional Complex in Tiptonville and the Bledsoe County Correctional Complex in Pikeville, in partnership with the Tennessee Department of Health (TDH) and the Tennessee Department of Military. Results of the mass testing for state employees and contract workers are as follows:

Total employees tested-----1,145
Total negative results----- 1,126
Total positive results----- 19
TDOC staff positive-----13
Contract employees positive-----6

The employees who tested positive were notified of the results and referred to their primary care provider. They were further advised to seek testing for any close contacts in their homes and to self-isolate for 14 days. All of the employees were asymptomatic at the time of testing. Currently, one inmate at Trousdale Turner Correctional Center has tested positive and two inmates at the Turney Center Industrial Complex tested positive.

The Department is currently conducting contact tracing at both facilities. Disinfection and safety measures are ongoing. All staff and inmates have received cloth masks, and they are being reminded to continue practicing the recommendations from the CDC and the TDH to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

The Department of Correction encourages members of the public to visit our website for frequently asked questions related to COVID-19.

<https://www.tn.gov/correction/frequently-asked-questions-regarding-covid-19.html>



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, April 28, 2020

CONTACT: Dorinda Carter
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TDOC Directs Fourth Round of Mass Testing

Hartsville- A fourth round of mass testing has begun at a CoreCivic prison in order to further ensure the safety of staff and inmates. Beginning today, all inmates at the Trousdale Turner Correctional Center (TTCC) will be tested for COVID-19. CoreCivic, the operators of TTCC, will begin testing their employees on Wednesday.

Based on the return of several positive COVID-19 test results at TTCC, the Department of Correction directed the facility to provide additional testing for inmates. CoreCivic is collaborating with the department in this effort.

TDOC Commissioner Tony Parker has called mass testing a strategic and proactive targeted plan based on aggressive contact tracing to address the pandemic. To date, 3,810 inmates have been tested. Results of the tests will be made available on the Tennessee Department of Correction website: www.tn.gov/correction.

To date, 93 inmates at TTCC have tested positive for COVID-19. Statewide, 756 inmates at seven facilities have tested positive, the vast majority of whom are asymptomatic. Eight inmates were hospitalized. All but three have been released from the hospital and are recovering.

The Department has also produced and delivered more than 93,000 masks for staff, inmates, county jails and health care workers. Disinfection and safety measures are ongoing at all facilities. Staff and inmates are being reminded to continue practicing the recommendations from the CDC and the TDH to help prevent spreading COVID-19.

The Department of Correction encourages members of the public to visit our website for [Frequently Asked Questions Related To COVID-19](#).

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TO: Tony Parker, Commissioner
Lisa Piercey, MD/Commissioner TDH

FROM: Lee R. Dotson, Assistant Commissioner of Prisons
Kenneth Williams, MD PhD, Chief Medical Officer/Acting AC Clinical Services

DATE: April 17, 2020

RE: Bledsoe County Correctional Complex COVID-19 Testing Plan

The Tennessee Department of Correction/Bledsoe County Correctional Complex (BCCX) proposes to conduct COVID-10 testing of select members of the inmate population; with the support of our vendor partner Centurion. This testing will be initiated on April 18, 2020 at 0600 (Central) and is anticipated to be completed no later than noon, same day. Test kits, provided by the vendor, will be shipped to Garcia Labs, the vendor's subcontractor for PCR testing. (Garcia will provide a courier to recover the tests from BCCX, who will transport the items to Nashville International Airport, for shipping to Garcia Labs.) Garcia Labs has confirmed, with Centurion, that the results will be provided, no later than "dinner" Sunday evening. Centurion will have the ability to track the shipment and will maintain situational awareness, with Garcia, throughout the entirety of the process.

Inmates have been identified, for testing, through contact tracing and/or as a result of the following criteria:

- 1) Direct exposure to a confirmed positive (includes cellmates and close contacts)
- 2) Inmates who have screened positive and are currently symptomatic
- 3) Potential exposure to a confirmed positive (Exposure during recreation, tier time, meals, those associated with a screened positive, symptomatic inmates, etc.)

This target, testing pool of inmates has been expanded, as noted above, due to the communal living structure associated with dining, recreating, programming and socializing in limited space; even in an environment where social distancing, enhanced sanitation and hygiene have been promoted and enforced. Also, The current patient selection represents a focused strategy, based upon cell assignments and restricted movements, over the last seven (7) days. However, given the experience that the incubation period, of this virus, can potentially be up to fourteen (14) days and perhaps longer in a geriatric patient, we may identify additional persons, under investigation, over the next several days.

Inmate identification and cell assignment can be found on the attached spreadsheet.

TO: Tony Parker, Commissioner
Lisa Piercey, MD/Commissioner TDH

FROM: Lee R. Dotson, Assistant Commissioner of Prisons
Kenneth Williams, MD PhD, Chief Medical Officer/Acting AC Clinical Services

DATE: April 19, 2020

RE: Covid-19 Select Facilities Testing Plan

The Tennessee Department of Correction proposes to conduct COVID-19 follow-on testing at the Bledsoe County Correctional Complex (BCCX), as well as conducting targeted testing of select members of the inmate population housed at the Northwest Correctional Complex (NWCX) and the Turney Center Industrial Complex (TCIX). All testing will be accomplished with the support of our vendor partner Centurion. The testing will be initiated on April 19, 2020 by 1600 (Central), at all sites, with an anticipated completion of 1600 (Central), on April 20, 2020. There are a total of 1200 test kits available, in state, at present. Garcia labs is flying an additional 5300 vendor provided test kits to a TBD Tennessee airport; at which time the previous night's completed test kits will be returned, by air courier, to Garcia Labs for PCR testing. The test kits completed, on April 20, 2020, will be forwarded to Garcia labs, same day, via commercial shipper. Garcia Labs has indicated to Centurion representatives that Garcia anticipates all results should be acquired by COB, on April 22, 2020. As with our previous mass testing, Centurion will have the ability to track the shipment and will maintain situational awareness, with Garcia, throughout the entirety of the process.

Inmates have been identified, for testing, through contact tracing and/or as a result of the following criteria:

- 1) Direct exposure to a confirmed positive (includes cellmates and close contacts)
- 2) Inmates who have screened positive and are currently symptomatic
- 3) Potential exposure to a confirmed positive (Exposure during recreation, tier time, meals, those associated with a screened positive, symptomatic inmates, etc.)

This target, testing pool of NWCX and TCIX inmates has been expanded, as noted above, due to the communal living structure associated with dining, recreating, programming and socializing in limited space; even in an environment where social distancing, enhanced sanitation and hygiene have been promoted and enforced. Also, the current patient selection for the NWCX and TCIX testing scheme represents a focused strategy, based upon cell assignments and restricted movements, over the last seven (7) days. However, given the experience that the incubation period, of this virus, can potentially be up to fourteen (14) days and perhaps longer in a geriatric patient, we may identify additional persons, under investigation, over the next several days.

The following are the facilities participating in the testing, noting number of housing areas and total populations, to be tested, at each site:

BCCX – 32 Housing areas and 1,894 Inmates

TCIX – 10 Housing areas and 310 Inmates

NWCX – 15 Housing areas and 900 Inmates

To: TDOC Wardens and Operations Staff
From: Lee R. Dotson - ACP
Date: March 17, 2020
Subject: **Cleaning and Sanitation of Facilities**

Institutional Cleaning Plan

Inmate commercial cleaners should be assigned to shifts and tasked to clean showers, tables, rails, doors/doorways, windows, phones, floors, and appliances. Approved chemicals with MSDS cards on file with fire and safety should be used to clean and sanitize all areas. Sanitation Inmates assigned to scrub and sanitize the inmate showers will report daily, 7 days a week and spray the showers with a bleach solution, scrub the walls, knobs and doors of the showers. (Showers located in units housing quarantined or isolated inmates will be disinfected after each use. Likewise, telephones in these units will be disinfected following each use.) Unit Managers can provide an 110V power washer once a week to each unit in order to thoroughly clean showers, if available.

A-Building Checkpoint/ Main Kitchen/ Dining Room /Medical/School/Recreation Area/ Program Buildings

Assigned inmate commercial cleaners should disinfect their assigned areas by wiping tables, hand rails, doors/doorways/knobs, phones, floors, windows and appliances. The chemical that should be used is germicidal and/or a bleach solution. High traffic areas such as check point, the clinic, chow halls, entrances to units, schools, gym, mail room area, intake and program buildings, should continuously be wiped throughout the day, staff will ensure supplies are available. Security sensitive areas such as, mobile patrols, control rooms, armory, sally ports, tool rooms, sharps rooms, should be cleaned throughout the day by staff. Administrative areas and facility checkpoints should be cleaned throughout the day by an assigned inmate cleaner. The outside rails and doors at the entrance of the facility should also be wiped continually during business hours by an inmate commercial cleaner. Kitchen/Dining Room table's, seats, rails, and door knobs should be wiped down before and after each housing unit enters/exits the dining hall.

Sanitation Officers, Unit Managers and designated security staff are to inspect their areas of responsibility to ensure each area is being cleaned and sanitized properly. Supervisors and Unit Managers should be instructed to assist the sanitation officer on monitoring their areas of supervision to assure cleaning is completed and that disinfecting/cleaning chemicals are available. All trash should be collected daily and taken to outside dumpsters. All staff areas will be cleaned and disinfected several times throughout their shift. All inmates and staff should be advised to wash their hands with soap and water multiple times daily.



The Centers for Disease Control now recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain. The CDC also advises the use of simple cloth face coverings to slow the spread of the virus and help those who may have the virus and do not know it from transmitting it to others.

Effective today, the Department of Correction will begin distributing cloth masks to all TDOC staff and inmates. Cloth masks are being issued as recommended by the CDC and for the purpose stated within CDC guidelines. The distribution process could take the remainder of the week to ensure that every person receives one. You are advised to take the following steps as it relates to the care and use of your mask:

- Wash your hands prior to handling the mask and after you remove it
- Remove the mask before you enter your home and place it in a bag (preferably paper bag)
- Wash the item in soap and warm water (washing machine is acceptable)
- Hang to dry in order to prolong the life of the mask
- Ensure the mask fits snugly but comfortably against the side of the face
- Allow for breathing without restriction

The Department of Correction is working diligently to ensure every employee as well as every person in our care and custody receives the necessary equipment for their safety and protection.

To: All Correctional Administrators
All Wardens
All Core Civic Wardens
Superintendents

From: Lee Dotson, Assistant Commissioner of Prisons
Dr. Kenneth Williams, Acting Assistant Commissioner of Health Services/Chief Medical Officer

Date: April 10, 2020

Re: *Instructions on appropriate mask handling*

DCCO and facilities have received several calls, emails, and social media posts concerning the need for instructions on how to properly use the provided masks. Please provide the below instructions to staff and inmates and post in conspicuous areas regarding putting a mask on and removing a mask:

Putting the mask on

1. **Wash your hands**
2. Grasp the loops, one in each hand with the folded side of the mask facing away from you
3. The top of the mask is easily identified, as there is a strip, inside the mask, that will allow for the mask to slightly form around the bridge of the nose
4. Pull the mask toward your face, covering your nose and mouth, and place a loop around each ear
5. Slightly bend the nose piece, located at the bridge of the nose, to form the mask around the bridge of the nose.

Removing the mask

1. **Wash your hands**
2. Grasp the loops, behind the ears; pull gently toward the back of the head
3. Remove the loops from around the ears and pull the mask away from your face
4. Place the mask aside and wash your hands

At the end of the day, ensure the mask is washed; **in the sink** with warm water and soap, and hung to dry before reuse.

REMEMBER to wash your hands before putting the mask on and after removing the mask.

CC: Dr. Kenneth Wiley
Dr. Kenneth Williams
Dir. Dorinda Carter
Dir. Brian Hughes
CA April Buckner
CA Sara Hodges
CA Shaundra Davis
William Wall, TCI

ld/lg